

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method using electronic commerce for performing a transfer of a utility's customer base, the method involving the use of a computer, the computer adapted to access an internet for performing the transfer of assets, comprising the steps of:

using a computer, a potential seller accessing via the internet a website belonging to a third company facilitator and posting information about one or more utility customers it wishes to make available for transfer;

using a computer, a potential buyer accessing via the internet a website belonging to the third company facilitator and viewing the information posted by the potential seller concerning the one or more utility customers the seller has made available for transfer, wherein viewing the information includes viewing detailed information about each customer or a group of customers, such as an energy customer-type per customer or group of customers, a load customer-type per customer or group of customers, a load characteristic of the group of customers, a load characteristic of each individual customer, and the location of each customer or group of customers, and wherein viewing the information also includes the buyer searching through the information by sorting the customers available for transfer by energy customer-type (such as water, gas, or electric-type customers), by load customer-type (such as industrial, commercial, or residential customer-type or by actual load data), and by geographic location (such as by country, state or province, city, county, or other geographic region);

the third company facilitator acquiring information about the buyer's viewing habits while the buyer is accessing the information on the third company facilitator's website; and

if the buyer is interested in acquiring the seller's one or more utility customers that are posted to the third company facilitator's website by the seller, the buyer indicating an intention via the third company facilitator's website, wherein indicating an intention includes indicating which utility customer or group of utility customers of the seller the buyer wishes to acquire.

2. A method for performing a transfer of the assets of a utility-based commodity comprising the steps of:

performing a transfer of utility assets, this performing step including the further step of,

using electronic commerce (e-commerce) technologies and processes during the performing and practicing step thereby improving the efficiency of the performance of the transfer of utility assets.

3. An e-commerce based data processing system comprising:

A first server,

A second server,

And a third server and at least one personal computer/workstation connected to the third server that is adapted for use by a third "facilitator" company,

The third server being accessible via the internet to the first server, which is adapted for use by a first company potential business partner,

The third server being accessible via the internet to the second server, which is adapted for use by a second company potential business partner,

The third company functioning as a facilitator for facilitating a culmination or a completion of a business transaction between the first company and the second company.

4. The e-commerce based data processing system of claim 3, wherein the business transaction is a transfer of utility assets from the first company to the second company.
5. The e-commerce based data processing system of claim 4, wherein the utility assets include the transfer of a utility's customer base.
6. The e-commerce based data processing system of claim 3, wherein, when the second company accesses the internet and logs onto the third server of the third company, the second company's username and password is validated, the second company's clearance level is validated, and the second company's credit history is validated, where upon: (1) the second company then views on its workstation display screen a display that has a plurality of options including the ability to use one or more selected software applications that reside on the third company's third server, (2) the second company selects one or more of these software applications, a set of data (and in particular a set of utility asset data), and a set of parameters relevant to the use of that set of data, (3) the third server of the third company unlocks the selected software application and the data and executes the selected software application using the selected data and the selected parameters, and (4) a set of results are displayed remotely at the second company's workstation or personal computer.
7. The e-commerce based data processing system of claim 6, wherein at the end of the session being executed on the third company's server, the third company's third server calculates the value of the applications and data that

have been used, and an amount is charged against an account that has been established with the second company.

8. The e-commerce based data processing system of claim 6, wherein when the second company logs off, the second company's selected parameters are saved both on the third company's third server and on the second company's computer for future use as a history file.
9. The e-commerce based data processing system of claim 3, wherein, when the second company logs into the third server of the third company, a set of security levels of the user are checked and validated.
10. The e-commerce based data processing system of claim 9, wherein a "granularity" of the security levels transcends from a high level to a lower level, as follows: (1) access to the third company's website or portal is controlled, (2) access to specific services offered within that website is controlled, (3) access to certain data, information types is controlled, (4) access to different resolutions of the data is controlled, and (5) each data element of the property owner's data is tagged with its own security level, the tag being further controlled by the owner of the data.
11. A method for storing and viewing data at successively higher user selectable levels of resolution, comprising the steps of: utilizing a graphical model, viewing a customer demographic available for transfer as a layer of information, and further viewing data linked to that customer demographic including the number of customers available for transfer, the load characteristics for that customer demographic, and the load characteristics for each customer within the customer demographic.
12. A method using electronic commerce for facilitating a transfer of utility information, comprising the steps of:

a potential buyer accessing a third company facilitator's website to view information posted by one or more potential sellers; and

the third company facilitator acquiring information concerning the buyer's usage and viewing habits while the buyer is accessing the information posted by one or more potential sellers on the third company facilitator's website.

13. A method using electronic commerce for performing a transfer of utility assets, the method involving the use of a computer, the computer adapted to access an internet for performing the transfer of assets, comprising the steps of: (a) using the computer, accessing, by a second company, the internet for obtaining and viewing a web page belonging to a third company facilitator, such web page containing information belonging to a first company which relates to the transfer of utility assets; and (b) if such second company is interested in such information being displayed on the third company's web page and which belongs to the first company, using, by such second company, the third company web page to complete a business transaction with the first company.
14. The method for performing the transfer of utility assets of claim 13, wherein the information being displayed on the third company's web page, being accessed by the second company, and belonging to the first company relates to a customer base of the first company offered for transfer, the first company selling or trading the customer base, and the second company accessing the third company's web page when the second company is interested in acquiring the customer base available from the first company.
15. A method for performing and practicing the transfer of utility assets comprising the steps of: (1) using a computer, accessing, by a second company, an internet, (2) when the internet is accessed, accessing, by the

second company, a third company server, (3) when the third company server is accessed, further accessing a website of the third company, (4) when the third company website is accessed, accessing, by the second company, a list of information in the third company website for the purpose of performing a business transaction with a first company, (5) during the step of accessing the list of information in the third company website, indicating an intention, by the second company, to complete the business transaction with the first company, and (6) when the step of indicating the intention is implemented, completing by the second company said business transaction with the first company.

16. The method of claim 15, for performing and practicing the transfer of utility assets, wherein the list of information in the third company website comprises a list of a plurality of customers available for transfer by the first company.
17. The method of claim 15, for performing and practicing the transfer of utility assets, wherein the indicating step for indicating the intention by the second company to complete the business transaction with the first company comprises the step of indicating an intention to purchase one or more of the customers from the first company.
18. The method of claim 15, for performing and practicing the transfer of utility assets, wherein the step of accessing a website of the third company comprises the further steps of accessing a public area for viewing an asset list, accessing a registered user's area for viewing an asset summary and for executing a confidentiality agreement, and accessing a confidential area after the confidentiality agreement is executed for viewing details of the customers listed on the customer list and described in the customer summary.